Islam in Europe

Peter O'Brien (Trinity University)

ABSTRACT

Xenophobia is on the rise in Europe; and the ten million Muslims living there are often its targets. This paper contends that the fear and anxiety Westerners exhibit toward Muslims stem ultimately from a fear and anxiety regarding ourselves and our beliefs. I argue that the perceived standoff with Muslims causes us to doubt the sincerity and superiority of our own convictions. The latter are predominantly liberal in origin and orientation. Muslims' critique and rejection of European liberalism lead us to question our most revered beliefs. We respond by trying to persuade or compel Muslims to embrace our liberal principles. When they resist, we see no recourse but to exercise arbitrary power on them. But this is an act for which our liberal tenets offer no convincing justification. We sense this and with it the limits of liberalism.

Hate is more important for the hater than the object of his hate.
- Vaclav Havel

INTRODUCTION

In the West abound anxiety, mistrust and fear regarding Muslims. Many of us choose not to travel to Muslim countries for fear of becoming victims of barbaric acts of terrorism. Most of us fret over the fact that Muslims have a firm grip on the spigot of the world's oil reserves. And in 1991 we convinced ourselves that Saddam Hussein represented a threat on par with Adolf Hitler.[1]For a discussion of the historical and ideological roots of Western views of Muslims, see Maxime Rodinson, Europe and the Mystique of Islam (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1987; or Edward Said, Orientalism (New York: Vintage, 1978)[>[1]

But Muslims can't really scare us. After all, it took but a few weeks fully to vanquish the "Butcher of Baghdad" with his fourth largest army in the world. Moreover, whereas we swiftly united in a stalwart international coalition against the Iraqi menacer, most of his supposed Arab allies joined our ranks. And we need only think back a few more years to the Iran-Iraq War to console ourselves with the memory of an internecine struggle which pitted Muslims against Muslims -- something which has not occurred among Westerners since World War Two. Granted, each of us can probably recall some personal hardship in 1973 and 1979 when Arabs or Persians withheld "our" oil. Yet we all now realize, along with economists such as Angus Maddison[2]Phases of Capitalist Development (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 142-52.[2], that the two embargoes merely exacerbated imminent or existing world recessions. More comfortingly, as Charles Issawi[3]An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), p. 207.[3] has shown, the great flood of petrodollars which flowed east in the seventies was eventually channelled back through Western banks to fuel the economic boom of the eighties. Most of our hostages, we must admit, are now back home safe and sound. Even that worst of hostage crises, in Teheran in 1980, ended in the release of all the captives due to the restraint exhibited by the kidnappers and the Iranian government. At any rate, these unfortunate events seem rather feeble in comparison to our own proven ability to hold, in effect, an entire nation of Iraqis hostage, leaving perhaps as many as 300,000 dead before the ordeal was over.

More curiously, Europeans show considerable concern over the 10 million Muslim migrants residing in their countries. In 1979 and 1980, for example, German newspapers overflowed with countless exposes and worrisome editorials about the discovery of some 1000 Koran schools operating in the Federal Republic. In 1989 the French entangled themselves in a bitter national debate over the refusal of a handful of Muslim girls to abandon their headscarves before entering a public school. And at roughly the same time the British felt it necessary to marshal the nation's security forces to hide and protect a single author from Muslim assassins.

Again, these misgivings seem exaggerated. The Irish Republican Army daily threatens the lives of numerous British subjects. Muslim-related disturbances, such as the Turkish-led wildcat strike in Cologne's Ford factory in 1973 or the Paris riots of 1991, have been sporadic and easily quelled. We also do well to recall that the overwhelming majority of these Muslims do not even enjoy the right to vote in European polities. Even if they did, their scant numbers preclude any troublesome electoral impact. Moreover, as resident aliens most are subject to easy deportation if they act up. And those little girls, like the pupils attending Koran schools, are merely exercising the right of religious freedom celebrated and guaranteed in the French and
German constitutions.

So what explains our anxiety? Following Havel's insight, I suggest that our fears have much more to do with ourselves than with Muslims. In particular, I argue that the perceived standoff with Muslims causes us to doubt the sincerity and superiority of our own convictions. The latter are predominantly liberal in origin and orientation. Muslims' critique and rejection of European liberalism lead us to question our most revered beliefs. We respond by trying to persuade or compel Muslims to embrace our liberal principles. When they resist, we see no recourse but to exercise arbitrary power on them. But this is an act for which our liberal tenets offer no convincing justification. In some sense, we are like the insecure neighborhood bully. We do not doubt our capacity to bully our Muslim neighbors but we cannot justify the bullying to ourselves. We do not distrust and fear Muslims so much as we distrust and fear ourselves.

LIBERALISM DEFINED

Liberalism has its roots in the Enlightenment. So although today we associate liberalism with general political, economic, social and cultural aspects (civil liberties and representative government, free markets, modern, pluralistic societies, and values such as critical reason and tolerance), its core is epistemological and ontological. We thus rightly identify as its founding fathers great thinkers like Bacon, Newton, Locke and Descartes. Each of these men made pioneering epistemological and ontological breakthroughs. They debunked the arguments and authorities of Scholasticism and demonstrated both the possibility and superiority of autonomous reason and scientific inquiry. Each in his own way argued that man possessed the capacity to reason aright and thus fully understand his world. Newton's exhortation to understand "Natural Philosophy [and] Mathematical Principles," Bacon's to "go to the facts for everything," Locke's to "consult reason," and Descartes' to conclude "Coqito, erqo sum" all reposed on the persuasion that the world is intelligible to us through reason. These men and others argued that we can understand our world as well as know our own best self-interests. Only our own misguided conventions, whether custom, coercion, or superstition, stood in the way of pursuing and realizing our self-interests. We simply needed to have the courage to abandon these comfortable, but enslaving conventions. Thus Kant declared the purpose and challenge of the Enlightenment in this way: "Enlightenment is man's exodus from his self-incurred tutelage.... Dare to know! Have the courage to use your own understanding; this is the motto of the Enlightenment."[4]"What Is Enlightenment?" in The Philosophy of Kant, ed. and trans. Carl J. Friedrich (New York: Random House, 1949), p. 132[4[] These thinkers believed that knowledge of the natural and human world was reducible to simple facts and relationships and therefore communicable through unambiguous phrases and principles (expressed mathematically wherever possible). Consequently, all persons could achieve objective knowledge, for it was commonsensical. Descartes averred that "Good sense is of all things in the world the most equitably distributed...; the power of judging well and of distinguishing between the true and the false, which, properly speaking, is what is

called good sense, or reason, is by nature equal in all men".[5]"Discourse on Method," in Philosophical Writings, ed. and trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: Modern Library, 1958), p. 93.[5]

We associate these discoveries with "liberalism" because they depend so much on freedom. Our reason must be autonomous or free of superstitions to judge correctly. Similarly, the institutions which developed out of the Enlightenment and still characterize our societies stress freedom. We espouse free, eventually universal education to enable and to teach us to use our reason. We desire free markets so that self-knowing human beings can pursue their own interests. We construct free polities with civil liberties and representative institutions so that all citizens can discuss and represent their interests. This notion of free agency lies at the heart of liberalism. It represents not only the normative claim that all men should be free. It also rests on the empirical assertion that free persons will necessarily discern and assent to the truths these great thinkers perceived before the rest of us. Even Rousseau's admission that enlightening human beings would prove quite difficult and necessitate forcing them to be free celebrates o freedom. For Emile, once forced to be free, is absolutely certain of the validity of his learned ways and appreciative of his mentor's compulsory methods.

Enlightenment thinkers also promised that freedom would bring progress and power to human beings. Free inquiry and education would allow scientists to discover the laws of nature and thus enable us finally to control it rather than vice-versa. Bacon simply equated knowledge and power. Smith demonstrated that free actors in the free market would naturally enhance efficiency and order as if led by an invisible hand. John Stuart Mill believed the clash of ideas and opinions made possible by free political institutions would inevitably produce the best public policy. And Kant thought that freedom coupled with reason would lead to "the kingdom of ends" and "perpetual peace". These grand hopes rested on what Thomas Spragens has called "epistemological manicheanism". The Enlightenment divided the world into two realms: the kingdom of coercion, superstition, ignorance, self-enslavement, in a word, darkness; and the kingdom of truth, reason, progress, self-mastery, in a word, light.[6]The Irony of Liberal Reason (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). I have drawn heavily on this work for the inspiration behind this essay.[6] Liberty represented a kind of bridge from the former to the latter. As such, liberty became virtually synonymous with prudence, perfection and power. Nothing could prevent free persons from improving, indeed perfecting, their world and their selves.

Needless to say, countless subsequent thinkers in our own tradition have given us cause to question the Enlightenment's unswerving faith in human sagacity, morality and progress. Marx exposed the dysfunctions of the free market. Nietzsche chipped away at, indeed tore down, the foundations of Western science and morality. Shelley depicted the Frankensteinian nightmare of our scientific discoveries. Weber attuned us to the disenchantment and self-entrapment of our rational, efficient bureaucracies. Freud revealed our subliminal irrationalities and discontents. Orwell shocked us with his demonstration of the abuse and distortion of language. Schumpeter showed democracy to be a political ideology no different from others used by leaders to sway the masses. And Lippmann uncovered widespread support for pre-Enlightenment values in mass public opinion. I could extend the list indefinitely, for many thinkers have pursued, broadened and strengthened the unsettling insights of these modern skeptics and cynics. We live today in what Ulrich Beck calls the "risk society".[7]Risk Society (London: Sage, 1992).[7] More than at any time in human history we are sensitive to and frightened by the risks and dangers created by our own fabrications, be they nuclear, environmental, genetic, economic or political. Furthermore, as both Beck and Anthony Giddens have pointed out,[8]Ibid.; and Modernity and Self-Identity (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).[8] the ultimate source of our doubts and fears is our own "reflexivity". We have turned the Enlightenment's most powerful weapon (reason) on the Enlightenment itself and used this weapon to doubt and/or discredit our noblest achievements.

Beck and Giddens also note that most of us resist these conclusions. Conceding them amounts to recognizing our most cherished values, institutions, and accomplishments as quixotic delusions. Like the Spanish hero, we find it discomforting and debilitating to gaze into the mirror. We choose, instead, to gallop onward with our heads held high in the conviction that we are right. Accordingly, cynics are not our only esteemed thinkers. Many writers have gained fame and acclaim by protecting the Enlightenment against its assailants. Nagel, Hempel and Popper have redoubled efforts to demonstrate the possibility of objective knowledge in science. Friedman and Hayek have renewed and reinvigorated faith in the free market. Rawls and Habermas have redefined and reconfirmed basic Kantian ethics and politics. Each of these men and others like them staunchly defend human rationality

and freedom. For Nagel, Hempel and Popper these notions are vindicated by the exacting methodologist devoted to verification yet open to falsification; for Friedman and Hayek by rational economic man capable of knowing his own interests if free to do so; for Rawls and Habermas by the thinking ethical self free, behind the "veil of ignorance" or in the "ideal speech situation," from the contingencies, prejudices, and coercions of history and society.

Most Westerners cannot find the time to read and consider these thoughtful treatises. We therefore look for more obvious and available confirmations of our beliefs. Perhaps nothing has done more to soothe our insecurities and affirm our confidence than the collapse of communism in the Soviet empire. We like to think that the East Europeans finally deposed their oppressors because they cherished the same ideals we hold so dear. And the vigorous attempts of the successor regimes to seek our aid and emulate our ways further strengthen our belief in the validity and superiority of our principles and practices. The relentless campaign undertaken by our governments to proselytize the "Western Way of Life" throughout East Europe and elsewhere has played, I think, a crucial role in buttressing our self-confidence. For as we gain converts to the faith, we can take solace in the idea that our beliefs represent, at worst, the best option available and, at best, the universally superior option. We liberals feed on converts because the internal logic of liberalism demands the constant assent of rational free agents.

MUSLIM RESISTANCE

Muslims attract our attention and antipathy because they refuse to convert. All across the Arabian Peninsula, for instance, we see the persistence of monarchies. Moreover, the peoples living under this vestigial medieval authority seem content to tolerate it. In 1979 the Persians overthrew their westward-looking, modernizing Shah and submitted to a regressive state governed by antiquated Islamic law. Examples of resistance to assimilation are far less dramatic in Europe but no less apparent. Muslim migrants tend to congregate in ethnic enclaves or ghettos where they reestablish and perpetuate the old customs of the homeland.[9]See Muhammad Anwar, The Myth of Return: Pakistanis in Britain (London: Heinemann, 1979).[9] They form their own exclusive organizations which spurn association with non-Muslim groups.[10]See, for example, Ertekin Oezcan, Tuerkische Immigrantenorganisationen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Berlin: Hitit Verlag, 1989), pp. 175-222.[10] Many Muslims forbid their children to go to public schools or force them to attend Koran schools where they unlearn what is taught in public classes.[11]Renate Irskens, "Koranschulen" epd-Dokumentation 35 (1977)[11] The majority of these migrants appear to object to consorting with Westerners, marrying Westerners, donning Western garb, or mastering Western languages.[12]Muhammad Abdullah, "Als Tuerke in Deutschland" Aktuelle Fragen 5(1981).[12] Everywhere we turn Muslims are telling us they do not wish to be like us.

But why? We often conveniently answer this query by pointing to fanaticism, obscurantism and demagoguery. Doubtless Islam has its fair share of fanatics, like any Weltanschauunq. Thus some Muslim critics do profess preposterous apocalyptic visions of imminent Western decline and messianic predictions of inevitable Muslim ascendancy.[13]See Meryem Cemile, Bati Uygarligi ve Insan (Istanbul: Kultur Basin Yayin Birligi, 1985). [13] We focus on these eccentrics, like the self-styled Turkish prophet Cemalettin Kaplan in Cologne,[14]See Stern (May 21, 1987).[]14] because we wish to ignore more thoughtful, penetrating critics. Given our liberal assumptions, the idea of a reasoned, yet resolute rejection of liberalism strikes us as oxymoronic and thus impossible.

These prejudices notwithstanding, measured critiques of Western liberalism do exist among Muslims. Generally speaking, they divide into two sorts. The first underscores Western hypocrisy. Westerners refuse to extend or guarantee to Muslims the same basic rights and privileges which supposedly all humans deserve. Muslim authors often rail against the erroneous image of Islam perpetrated in the European media and popular opinion. They complain that

Europeans fail to respect their much touted reason, open-mindedness and tolerance when it comes to the evaluation of Islam. They point to numerous concrete examples of hypocrisy. For instance, few Europeans object when nuns choose to wear a habit as an expression of their piety or live segregated in convents to worship as they wish. But when Muslim women cover their heads with scarves or their bodies with unrevealing garments or refuse to participate in activities involving men, Westerners cry

"patriarchy," "domination," and "injustice". In the early eighties the government of Northrhine-Westfalen resolved to provide Islamic religious instruction in the public schools, but then went on to establish a commission of Christian theologians to draft the curriculum. Muslim organizations vehemently opposed the plans, arguing that Christians would never tolerate a Christian curriculum written by Muslims. Similarly, whereas Muslims recognize Christianity as a legitimate faith (according to the Koran), only the Roman Catholic Church, not the evangelical churches, has reciprocated. Furthermore, the Federal Republic of Germany has declared the Roman Catholic and Evangelical Church "recognized religions" a legal status which entitles them to significant financial assistance from the state. Yet it has not done the same for Islam despite its roughly 2 million adherents in Germany. In the words of the Islamic Federation of Berlin: "If we in Berlin are to fashion our future together, then it does not suffice to support the justified demands of the black population in South Africa; it is far more necessary to support these freedoms and rights in Berlin itself, and for all of the faithful".[15]Leben wir miteinander (Berlin: Islamische Foederation in Berlin, 1986), p. 4. This entire document represents a persuasive example of the critique of European hypocrisy.[15]

Europeans have exhibited some respect and sympathy for criticisms of this sort. In Holland and Sweden, for example, Muslim migrants have been accorded the right to vote in local elections. In Germany, the Green Party has proposed enactment of a "right to settle" which would grant resident aliens all the rights of citizenship without requiring naturalization. In France, S.O.S. Racisme has incessantly spoken out against various forms of discrimination. In most European polities Muslims have won important court cases to protect their civil liberties.

[16]See Dieter Thraenhardt, ed., Auslaenderpolitik und Auslaenderintegration in Belgien, den Niederlanden und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (D sseldorf: Landeszentrale fuer politische Bildung, 1986).[16] Cries of hypocrisy gain limited sympathy because they, in effect, celebrate liberal values by demanding their application to Muslims.

Criticisms of the second sort are far more threatening. For they generally follow the same line of argument proffered by our own skeptics and cynics. Thus the free market has not liberated human beings, rather enslaved them to the machine, consumerism and raw materialism. Liberal ethics have hardly produced societies characterized by perpetual peace. Violence, aggression, exploitation and alienation run rampant in Western societies. "It must be regrettably acknowledged," concluded one critic, "that Western civilisation's shortcomings and weaknesses are no fewer than its advantages... despite the new pages of history turned, human happiness has not increased nor have social ills diminished".[17]Sayid Mujtaba Rukni Musawi Lari, Western Civilisation through Muslim Eyes (Teheran: Sadr Publishing House, 1977), p. 5.[17] These problems persist, moreover, not because the liberal project has yet to be completed, but because its underlying assumptions are profoundly flawed. Liberal tenets cannot stand up to "logical scrutiny". As a result, "modern man, more than any of his predecessors, can construct man, but knows less than any of them what it is he is constructing.... These new ideologies... fall short of answering basic human needs and... they either lead people to a sense of futility, or draw them into bondage".[18]Ali Shari'ati, Marxism and Other Western Fallacies (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1980), p. 16.[18]

Such writers do not always reserve their criticism to the West. Many have led efforts to reveal and reform the shortcomings of Islamic civilization itself.[19]For a description of the longstanding internal debates about the strengths and weaknesses of Islamic principles and practices, see John Obert Voll, Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982). [19] But they aim to disabuse their readers of the urge to romanticize and emulate Western liberalism. Liberalism, they insist, offers no indisputably superior answers for humankind. Look to your own tradition for answers, they implore.[20]This theme is stressed, for instance, in the second paragraph of the Preamble to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.[20]

LIBERALIZING MUSLIMS

We choose not to see or hear these reasoned critiques of liberalism. As mentioned, the logic of liberalism teaches that free, rational thinking perforce culminates in the acceptance, not rejection, of liberalism. In response, we focus attention on the varied forces which allegedly obstruct Muslims' reason. Social scientific analysis of Muslims' situation in Europe is now voluminous. Since roughly the

late sixties European Governments have commissioned thousands of studies of their Muslim residents.[21]See, for instance, the 400-page bibliography in Adelheid Gliedner-Simon, Auslaender -- zwischen Integration und Remigration (Bonn: Informationszentrum Sozialwissenschaften, 1986).[21] Despite its quantity, this research underscores a constant and common theme. As a result of migrating from traditional to modern societies Muslims face rapid, disorienting, but inevitable change, Transplanted   virtually overnight from village to metropolis, Muslims find adjustment to the pace and demands of modern life difficult and threatening. They cling to their traditions (be they the patriarchal family, outdated religious precepts, or authoritarian political beliefs) in an inevitably fruitless attempt to escape or slow change and its corrosive consequences. Stubborn adherence to tradition, in the words of one German analyst,

should not be understood as a natural continuation of the lifestyle in the homeland, rather as a defense against the changed environment. The confrontation with the divergent ways of the surrounding world creates in every case a sense of uncertainty, a strain on the personality. [This leads] to signs of retreat and compensation, such as exaggeration of traditional norms and values, idealizing the homeland, avoidance of contact with the German environment.[22]Ursual Neumann, Erziehung auslaendischer Kinder (D sseldorf: Paedagogischer Verlag Schwann, 1980), p. 23.[22]

These defensive reactions are not "natural". They are aberrant and caused by the understandable but ultimately unwarranted fear of rapid change. Muslims are thus typically diagnosed as suffering various psychological and social disorders. These include "anomie," "anxiety," "culture shock," "identity confusion," "fragmentation of the self-image," "deficient self-confidence," "deficient ego identity," "psychic overload," "socio-cultural stress". All of these symptoms cause unnatural, deviant behavior, such as resignation, escapism, excessive consumption, aggression, crime, and extremism.[23]See, for instance, Franz Ronneberger, ed., Tuerkische Kinder in Deutschland (Nueremberq: Nuernberger Forschungsvereinigung, 1977); or Peter-Alexis Albrecht and Christian Pfelffer, Die Kriminalisierung junger Auslaender (Munich: Juventa Verlag,[23]

Such analyses essentially divide Muslims and Europeans into two distinct classes. The latter are assumed to be free agents able to employ their reason to act naturally and normally. Muslims, by contrast, are depicted as irrational actors not (yet) free to think or act reasonably. Put differently, political, cultural, and racial distinctions between Muslims and Europeans fade from view in these studies to be replaced by a more palatable epistemological distinction. Muslims are not different from us or treated differently by us because they hold foreign passports, believe in a different God, stem from non-European stock, or even have darker complexions. They simply have not had the opportunity to reason freely.

Both the liberal diagnosis and distinction determine the solution to the Muslim problem. Our goal becomes liberating and enlightening Muslims. For sociologists, this usually means ameliorating or eliminating the social inequalities which keep Muslims in a state of marginalization and underprivileged in European societies. Such authors prescribe social programs designed to provide Muslims the same opportunities in housing, education and employment enjoyed by Europeans.[24]See Hans-Joachim Hoffmann-Nowotny and Karl Otto Hondrich, eds., Auslaender in der Bundesrepublik und in der Schweiz (Frankfurt: Campus, 1982).[24] For psychologists and pedagogues the cure involves re-socializing Muslims (usually young ones whose minds are still malleable) to the modern liberal values prevalent in the West. Accordingly, they endorse programs which fully absorb and integrate Muslim pupils into the public educational system. All of these prescriptions at heart aim to make Muslims more like us, either by giving them the same opportunities (or freedoms) we have or by instructing them in our ways. Such proposals treat Muslims not like human beings, but like human matter to be molded after our own image. These therapies and cures rest on the firm liberal belief that Muslims will embrace our ways once they are given the opportunities, resources, and assistance to do so. Thus the German sociologist Hartmut Esser predicts that integrated foreigners will assimilate to the modern norms and values which maintain "system equilibrium" in the Federal Republic.[25]Aspekte der Wanderungssoziologie: Assimilation und Integration von Wanderern, ethnischen Gruppen und Minderheiten (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1980).[25] Even the much praised proposals for "multi-cultural education," which integrate into the general curriculum the beliefs and experiences of Muslims, ultimately seek to inculcate classic Enlightenment values in both Muslims and European pupils. Thus, two proponents of multi-cultural education argue that it "dismantles prejudices and nationalisms, facilitates tolerance for the strange and different, and awakens empathy for the situation of 'the other' rather than competitiveness".[26]Helmut Essinger and Achim Hellmich, "Unterrichtsmaterialen und -

medien fuer Interkulturelle Erziehung," in Auslaenderkinder im Konflikt, eds. H. Essinger and G. Hoff (Koenigstein: Athenaeum, 1981), p. 100.[26]

These analyses and proposals have not gone unheeded. Throughout the seventies and eighties in European polities with large migrant populations, governments launched and sustained extensive campaigns to integrate migrants into the mainstream of society. Thus the comprehensive social welfare programs were expanded to include resident aliens as well as citizens. Special programs targetted specifically at foreigners were devised to assist them in their adjustment to Western life (housing, language, vocational, and cultural programs). Educational programs were particularly stressed in the hope of making second-generation migrants into equal and able citizens by the time they reach maturity.[27]See Thraenhardt, Auslaenderpolitik.[27] One study likened these efforts to the development of an entire new "industry" replete with products and specialists, research and degrees, institutes and agencies, marketers and salespersons.[28]Hartmut Griese, "Kritisch-exemplarische Ueberlegungen zur Situation und Funktion der Auslaenderforschung und elner verstehenden Auslaenderpaedagogik," in Der glaeserne Fremde, ed., H. Griese (Leverkusen: Leske & Budrich, 1984), pp. 43-58.[28]

It is not my place to pass judgement on the wisdom of these initiatives. I only wish to argue that they tend to de-politicize relations between Muslims and Europeans. Generally speaking, such programs assist but do not empower their subjects. As mentioned, Muslim migrants do not enjoy the right to vote or stand for public office in all but a few European lands. Consequently, Muslims are excluded from participating in the design of programs aimed at them. Policies are made, in other words, for Muslims but not by them. More importantly, this critical division of labor and power rests on epistemological rather than political assumptions and justifications. Europeans vest themselves with the authority to act on and for Muslims on the basis of their liberal understanding that they know, better than the Muslims themselves, what is best for the newcomers. Put differently, European policy makers act as the self-appointed doctors and therapists of Muslims rather than their politically chosen representatives. When it comes to Muslims, therefore, Europeans excuse themselves from the political accountability they demand in their own relations.

Muslims find themselves entrapped in an apolitical Catch-22 common to all technocratic projects. If Muslims accept the assistance offered them, they in effect acquiesce to the image of themselves as illiberals gravely in need of European aid and instruction. If they resist or insist that they are being coerced into integrative programs, their recalcitrance is taken as yet another symptom of their ailment and, therefore, grounds for further treatment. This Catch-22 stems from the logic of liberalism which does not allow for a free and reasoned critique or rejection of the liberal order and axioms. Only free and   rational agents deserve the political rights associated with liberalism. Irrational actors require not liberty, but first and foremost liberation from their irrational tutelage. And as self-styled liberals we see it as our right and duty to be Muslims' liberators.

ARBITRARY AND ILLIBERAL RECOURSES

The problem with Muslims in Europe is that they refuse to be liberated or to depoliticize their relations with Europeans. They demand that they first receive their political rights so that they can determine themselves what is best for them. When those Muslim girls showed up at school with their headscarves, they were insisting on their right to free worship as well as the right to resist or reject the teachings of the French public schools. Turkish parents make a similar political statement when they whisk their children off to Koran school immediately following German classes. Countless Islamic organizations in Europe refuse to participate in official programs of integration, even if it means forfeiting much needed public assistance. For instance, mosques in Europe typically offer their visitors much more than a place of worship; they also provide an array of social services parallel to but independent of those offered by European governments.[29]Hans Voecking, "Die Moschee" CIBEDO--TEXTE 30 (November 15, 1984): 3-12.[29]

Such acts of resistance trouble and alarm us because they come in response to our generous attempts to offer Muslims the fruits of liberalism. Unlike their brethren in faraway places who might not yet be sufficiently exposed to liberal values or assistance, European Muslims eschew liberalism despite its ready availability. Thus nothing perturbs and perplexes Europeans as much as the

documented tendency among Muslim migrants to resist naturalization. Various naturalization schemes have been devised in European polities to give migrants the opportunity to become citizens of their host societies. Most involve liberalizing the requirements for naturalization to make it easy or easier for second-generation aliens to become citizens, for they are assumed to be the persons most willing and able to assimilate to Western norms and values. Furthermore, most of these plans entail swearing an oath of allegiance to the liberal principles enunciated in European constitutions once young migrants reach adulthood. The policies assume that after living in the West from an early age and being socialized in the public schools Western educated Muslims will voluntarily seek citizenship and embrace the values it embodies.

But Muslims won't take the oath. Moreover, our liberal logic has not prepared us for this phenomenon. For it teaches that free, rational adults will by nature assent to liberalism. By the same token, it teaches that liberal societies are justly and fairly constructed and organized and therefore worthy of the approval of free and rational persons. If we take Muslims seriously, therefore, we must face the prospect that liberal principles and practices engender discontent and disapproval. Moreover, if we admit that Muslims are free, rational agents, we must conclude, from their rejection, that they perhaps know something about liberalism which has escaped our scrutiny. And this, in turn, would suggest that our own assent to liberalism has not been as free or rational as we think.

Rather than recognize these unsettling possibilities, we choose to persist in the belief that Muslims' troubles lie with themselves rather than with us. We conclude that the antiquated customs and mores they bring with them from the homeland are more firmly rooted than we originally conceived. Their misfortune is greater than expected. We see no option but to judge the differences between us and them as entrenched, perhaps immutable. In this way, Muslims come to be viewed as outside agitators -- foreign threats in our midst whose alien nature runs far deeper than the possession of a different passport. As many a post-structuralist have noted, the sense of difference and otherness we feel toward Muslims stems more from the subjective image we wish to have of ourselves than from objective attributes common to Muslims.[30]See Said, Orientalism.[30]

We resolve, then, that their misfortune should not become our misfortune.[31]I borrow this idea from Bonnie Honig, "The Return of the Repressed in John Rawl's A Theory of Justice," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., August 30, 1991.[31] We can and must endeavor to reform them; but if they resist reform, we must limit or eliminate their undesirable influences on our societies. Accordingly, after roughly two decades of progressive, integrative legislation, we see throughout Europe in the late eighties and early nineties mounting calls and sympathies for tougher, more restrictive policies towards Muslim and other non-European migrants and refugees. The European Community, for instance, has initiated steps to "harmonize" the laws governing political asylum in o. member states in the hope of preventing refugees from trying their luck from one country to the next. Proposals have been submitted to institute "immigration quotas" which would place a numeric ceiling on the number of immigrants in the land and in some cases designate the countries from which immigrants would be accepted. And xenophobic parties like the National Front in France or Republicans in Germany have made significant gains throughout Europe in recent elections.

The restrictive proposals and policies all share the characteristic of blaming migrants and absolving Europeans of responsibility for the problems associated with large-scale migration. Thus calls to limit immigration have typically been justified on the grounds that Europeans cannot possibly absorb all the world's poor and persecuted. The problems of the Third World are simply too complex and intractable to be solved through an open-door policy toward persons fleeing those areas. Moreover, Europe has its own problems, particulary now that the Western Europeans have taken on the responsibility of guiding and aiding their Eastern European neighbors in the transition from dictatorship to democracy. This line of reasoning recently reached its apex (or nadir) in Germany. In response to neo-Nazi disturbances in cities such as Rostock, Christian Democrats reconfirmed and Social Democrats conceded to the government's plan to stem the tide of immigration into the newly united country. In so doing both parties effectively claimed that both the cause of and responsibility for the disturbances lie not with the neo-Nazis, but with the foreigners whose numbers have grown beyond acceptability. Perhaps this also explains the limited and at times reluctant police protection given the victims as well as the lenient sentences handed out to the convicted perpetrators.

Such acts trouble our conscience and offend our sensibilities because we see no viable alternative to them and at the same time cannot justify them with our liberal convictions. We have been taught

that the only effective and ethical way to deal with illiberals is to liberalize them. Moreover, the liberal paradigm has assured us that all human beings by nature possess the capacity and desire to become liberals when free to do so. Coercion should play no role. Our societies are self-governing and self-legitimating. But when the liberal cure fails to heal our social wounds, we are forced to accept the older idea that Muslims and Europeans have immutable and insurmounted differences. Yet it is precisely these kinds of irrational and arbitrary distinctions, whether religious, racial, nationalist, or ethnic, which liberalism was supposed to overcome and transcend. When we cannot demonstrate on Muslims the universality of our liberal views of human nature and morality, we see no recourse but to discipline and coerce Muslims by using tactics and rationales which belong to a pre-liberal era. And this forces us to acknowledge, uncomfortably, that we are less liberal than we believe. After all, is there any genuine philosophical or ethical difference between the policies of liberal governments to discourage the entrance and encourage the exit of Muslims and the slogans of the National Front or Republican Party purporting that France exists for the French, Germany for the Germans? The only difference lies in the fact that the xenophobes feel perfectly justified in bullying Muslims, whereas we do not. This, more than anything else, explains why Muslims cause us so much anxiety.

FOOTNOTES

[1] For a discussion of the historical and ideological roots of Western views of Muslims, see Maxime Rodinson, Europe and the Mystique of Islam (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1987; or Edward Said, Orientalism (New York: Vintage, 1978).

[2] Phases of Capitalist Development (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 142-52.

[3] An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), p. 207.

[4] "What Is Enlightenment?" in The Philosophy of Kant, ed. and trans. Carl J. Friedrich (New York: Random House, 1949), p. 132.

[5] "Discourse on Method," in Philosophical Writings, ed. and trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: Modern Library, 1958), p. 93.

[6] The Irony of Liberal Reason (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). I have drawn heavily on this work for the inspiration behind this essay.

[7] Risk Society (London: Sage, 1992).

[8] Ibid.; and Modernity and Self-Identity (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

[9] See Muhammad Anwar, The Myth of Return: Pakistanis in Britain (London: Heinemann, 1979).

[10] See, for example, Ertekin Oezcan, Tuerkische Immigrantenorganisationen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Berlin: Hitit Verlag, 1989), pp. 175-222.

[11] Renate Irskens, "Koranschulen" epd-Dokumentation 35 (1977).

[12] Muhammad Abdullah, "Als Tuerke in Deutschland" Aktuelle Fragen 5(1981).

[13] See Meryem Cemile, Bati Uygarligi ve Insan (Istanbul: Kultur Basin Yayin Birligi, 1985).

[14] See Stern (May 21, 1987).

[15] Leben wir miteinander (Berlin: Islamische Foederation in Berlin, 1986), p. 4. This entire document represents a persuasive example of the critique of European hypocrisy.

[16] See Dieter Thraenhardt, ed., Auslaenderpolitik und Auslaenderintegration in Belgien, den Niederlanden und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (D sseldorf: Landeszentrale fuer politische Bildung, 1986).

[17] Sayid Mujtaba Rukni Musawi Lari, Western Civilisation through Muslim Eyes (Teheran: Sadr Publishing House, 1977), p. 5.

[18] Ali Shari'ati, Marxism and Other Western Fallacies (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1980), p. 16.

[19] For a description of the longstanding internal debates about the strengths and weaknesses of Islamic principles and practices, see John Obert Voll, Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982).

[20] This theme is stressed, for instance, in the second paragraph of the Preamble to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[21] See, for instance, the 400-page bibliography in Adelheid Gliedner-Simon, Auslaender -- zwischen Integration und Remigration (Bonn: Informationszentrum Sozialwissenschaften, 1986).

[22] Ursual Neumann, Erziehunq auslaendischer Kinder (Dusseldorf: Paedagogischer Verlag Schwann, 1980), p. 23.

[23] See, for instance, Franz Ronneberger, ed., Tuerkische Kinder in Deutschland (Nueremberq: Nuernberger Forschungsvereinigung, i-977); or Peter-Alexis Albrecht and Christian Pfelffer, Die Kriminalisierung junger Auslaender (Munich: Juventa Verlag, 1979).

[24] See Hans-Joachim Hoffmann-Nowotny and Karl Otto Hondrich, eds., Auslaender in der Bundesrepublik und in der Schweiz (Frankfurt: Campus, 1982).

[25] Aspekte der Wanderungssoziologie: Assimilation und Integration von Wanderern, ethnischen Gruppen und Minderheiten (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1980).

[26] Helmut Essinger and Achim Hellmich, "Unterrichtsmaterialen und -medien fuer Interkulturelle Erziehung," in Auslaenderkinder im Konflikt, eds. H. Essinger and G. Hoff (Koenigstein: Athenaeum, 1981), p. 100.

[27] See Thraenhardt, Auslaenderpolitik.

[28] Hartmut Griese, "Kritisch-exemplarische Ueberlegungen zur Situation und Funktion der Auslaenderforschung und elner verstehenden Auslaenderpaedagogik," in Der glaeserne Fremde, ed., H. Griese (Leverkusen: Leske & Budrich, 1984), pp. 43-58.

[29] Hans Voecking, "Die Moschee" CIBEDO--TEXTE 30 (November 15, 1984): 3-12.

[30] See Said, Orientalism.

[31] I borrow this idea from Bonnie Honig, "The Return of the Repressed in John Rawl's A Theory of Justice," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., August 30, 1991.